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APR 07 2005

OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Application of	:
Haw-Jyh Liaw et al	:DECISION ON PETITION
Application No. 09/839,768	:UNDER 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) AND
Filed: April 19, 2001	:37 CFR 1.183
Attorney Docket No. 60809-0080-us	:

This is a decision on the petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3), filed January 12, 2005, to accept an unintentionally delayed claim under 35 U.S.C. § 120 for the benefit of the prior-filed nonprovisional application set forth in the amendment filed concurrently with the instant petition. This also being treated under 37 CFR 1.183 requesting waiver of 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) "as that rule operates in conjunction with 37 CFR 1.17(t)."

The petition considered under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) is **DISMISSED**.

The petition considered under 37 CFR 1.183 is **DISMISSED**.

WITH RESPECT TO THE PETITION UNDER 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3):

A petition for acceptance of a claim for late priority under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) is only applicable to those applications filed on or after November 29, 2000. Further, the petition is appropriate only after the expiration of the period specified in 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii). In addition, the petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) must be accompanied by:

- (1) the reference required by 35 U.S.C. § 120 and 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(i) of the prior-filed application, unless previously submitted;
- (2) the surcharge set forth in § 1.17(t); and
- (3) a statement that the entire delay between the date the claim was due under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii) and the date the claim was filed was unintentional. The Commissioner may require additional information where there is a question whether the delay was unintentional.

The petition complies with items (1) through (3) above. However, the examiner has indicated that the proposed amendment would not be entered because the “entry of claim of priority would require a new grounds of rejection since it would remove art applied on grounds of rejection as prior art.” Therefore, since the amendment does not *prima facie* place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons indicated by the examiner, petitioner must now submit a Notice of Appeal, a request for continued examination (RCE) under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.114, or file a continuing application pursuant to the provisions of 37 CFR 1.53(b).

Any request for reconsideration of this decision must be accompanied by a cover letter entitled “Renewed Petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3)” and must include the appropriate reply to continue prosecution of the instant application.

**WITH RESPECT TO WAIVER OF THE SURCHARGE REQUIRED BY 37 CFR
1.78(a)(3)(ii) AND 37 CFR 1.17(t).**

Petitioner requests under 37 CFR 1.183 waiver of the applicable surcharge under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3)(ii) for the acceptance of an unintentionally delayed claim for priority under 35 U.S.C. § 120 as set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(t). In this regard, petitioner states that this is an extraordinary situation where waiver of the applicable fee is justified since “the Office failed to (i) make the correction to the Filing Receipt, and (ii) instruct the Applicant to amend the first sentence of the application to include the reference to the earlier application, as is typically the case.”

APPLICABLE RULE

37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(i), (ii) and (iii) provides:

(2)(i) Except for a continued prosecution application filed under § 1.53(d), any nonprovisional application or international application designating the United States of America claiming the benefit of one or more prior filed copending nonprovisional applications or international applications designating the United States of America must contain or be amended to contain a reference to each such prior application, identifying it by application number (consisting of the series code and serial number) or international application number and international filing date and indicating the relationship of the applications. Cross references to other related applications may be made when appropriate (see § 1.14).

(ii) This reference must be submitted during the pendency of the later-filed application. If the later-filed application is an application filed under 35 U.S.C. 111(a), this reference must also be submitted within the later of four months from the actual filing date of the later-filed application or sixteen months from the filing date of the prior-filed application. If the later-filed

application is a nonprovisional application which entered the national stage from an international application after compliance with 35 U.S.C. 371, this reference must also be submitted within the later of four months from the date on which the national stage commenced under 35 U.S.C. 371(b) or (f) in the later-filed international application or sixteen months from the filing date of the prior-filed application. These time periods are not extendable. Except as provided in paragraph (a)(3) of this section, the failure to timely submit the reference required by 35 U.S.C. 120 and paragraph (a)(2)(i) of this section is considered a waiver of any benefit under 35 U.S.C. 120, 121, or 365(c) to such prior-filed application. The time periods in this paragraph do not apply if the later-filed application is:

- (A) An application for a design patent;
- (B) An application filed under 35 U.S.C. 111(a) before November 29, 2000;
- or
- (c) A nonprovisional application which entered the national stage after compliance with 35 U.S.C. 371 from an international application filed under 35 U.S.C. 363 before November 29, 2000.

(iii) If the later-filed application is a nonprovisional application, the reference required by this paragraph must be included in an application data sheet (§ 1.76), or the specification must contain or be amended to contain such reference in the first sentence following the title.

(iv) The request for a continued prosecution application under § 1.53(d) is the specific reference required by 35 U.S.C. 120 to the prior-filed application. The identification of an application by application number under this section is the identification of every application assigned that application number necessary for a specific reference required by 35 U.S.C. 120 to every such application assigned that application number.

(3) If the reference required by 35 U.S.C. 120 and paragraph (a)(2) of this section is presented in a nonprovisional application after the time period provided by paragraph (a)(2)(ii) of this section, the claim under 35 U.S.C. 120, 121, or 365(c) for the benefit of a prior-filed copending nonprovisional application or international application designating the United States of America may be accepted if the reference identifying the prior-filed application by application number or international application number and international filing date was unintentionally delayed. A petition to accept an unintentionally delayed claim under 35 U.S.C. 120, 121, or 365(c) for the benefit of a prior-filed application must be accompanied by:

- (i) The reference required by 35 U.S.C. 120 and paragraph (a)(2) of this section to the prior-filed application, unless previously submitted;
- (ii) The surcharge set forth in § 1.17(f); and
- (iii) A statement that the entire delay between the date the claim was due under paragraph (a)(2)(ii) of this section and the date the claim was filed was unintentional. The Commissioner may require additional information where there is a question whether the delay was unintentional.

37 CFR 1.183 states that:

In an extraordinary situation, when justice requires, any requirement of the regulations in this part which is not a requirement of the statutes may be suspended or waived by the Commissioner or the Commissioner's designee, sua sponte, or on petition of the interested party, subject to such other requirements as may be imposed. Any petition under this section must be accompanied by the petition fee set forth in § 1.17(f).

OPINION

In order to grant any petition under 37 CFR 1.183, petitioner must show (1) that this is an extraordinary situation where (2) justice requires waiver of the rule. In re Sivertz, 227 U.S.P.Q. 255, 256 (Comm'r Pat. 1985). Petitioner has not shown that either condition exists in this case.

The circumstances of this case do not demonstrate an extraordinary situation, much less one where justice requires waiver of the rules. In this regard, petitioner failed to follow the rules pertaining to the proper procedure for filing an amendment to insert a claim for priority. More specifically, the proper procedure would have been to file an amendment in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121 instructing the Office to insert the claim for priority in the first sentence of the specification following the title or include the claim for priority in an Application Data Sheet (ADS) as provided by 37 CFR 1.76(b)(5), and not in a declaration. *See* 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(iii). Further, the claim for priority in the declaration was improper since there must be a relationship stated; i.e., whether the application is a continuation, division, or continuation-in-part. While the Office attempts to notify applicants of deficiencies in actions in a manner permitting a timely correction, the Office has no obligation to notify parties of deficiencies in their actions in a manner permitting a timely correction. *See In re Sivertz, supra; see also In re Colombo, Inc.*, 33 USPQ2d 1530, 1532 (Comm'r Pat. 1994). Rather, it is ultimately the responsibility of the applicants to ensure that a proper and timely submission is submitted so as to avoid having to file a petition to effect correction of the omission or deficiency. Colombo, Id. Therefore, the failure to timely submit a proper claim for priority of the earlier application within the time period set forth in 37 CFR 1.78(a)(ii) was a circumstance entirely within petitioner's control, and could

have been avoided by the exercise of reasonable care and diligence. Equitable powers should not be invoked to excuse the performance of a condition by a party that has not acted with reasonable, due care and diligence. U.S. v. Lockheed Petroleum Services, 709 F.2d 1472, 1475 (Fed. Cir. 1983).

Furthermore, since the USPTO did not cause or contribute to petitioner's filing delay, this case is even further removed from consideration as one where "justice requires" equitable relief. See Helfgott & Karras, P.C. v. Dickinson, 209 F.3d 1328, 54 USPQ2d 1425 (Fed. Cir. 2000). Further, petitioner's failure to comply with the requirements of the rules or procedures before the USPTO is not deemed to be an extraordinary situation that would warrant waiver of the rules or procedures under 37 CFR 1.183. See Honigsbaum v. Lehman, 903 F. Supp. 8, 37 USPQ2d 1799 (D.D.C. 1995).

Petitioner overlooks that his failure to timely file a proper claim for benefit of the earlier filed application under 35 U.S.C. § 120 constituted a *waiver* of his right to claim such benefit of priority. *See* 35 U.S.C. § 120 ("the Director may consider the failure to submit such [a claim] within that time period as a waiver of any benefit under this section"); 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii); *Cong. Rec.* S14719 (Nov. 17, 1999). Fortunately for petitioner, however, he may now seek reinstatement of his unintentionally waived right, subject, however, to payment of the very surcharge of which petitioner now complains. *See* 35 U.S.C. § 120, last sentence; 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3); *Cong. Rec.*, *supra*. That is, since petitioner now desires to be entitled to the potential benefits of the earlier application via § 120, then petitioner must also accept the consequences attendant to that action. *See Abbott Laboratories v. Novopharm Ltd.*, 38 USPQ2d 1309, 1312 (D.C. N. Il. 1996), *aff'd* 104 F.3d. 1305, 41 USPQ2d 1535 (Fed. Cir. 1997).

As authorized, the \$1,370 fee required by 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3)(ii) and the \$400 fee required by 37 CFR 1.183 will be charged to petitioner's Deposit Account No. 50-0310.

Further correspondence with respect to this matter should be addressed as follows:

By mail: Mail Stop PETITIONS
 Commissioner for Patents
 Post Office Box 1450
 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

By hand: Customer Service Window
 Randolph Building
 401 Dulany Street
 Alexandria, VA 22314

By fax: (703) 872-9306
 ATTN: Office of Petitions

Any questions concerning this matter may be directed to Wan Laymon at (571) 272-3220.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Frances Hicks". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Frances Hicks
Lead Petitions Examiner
Office of Petitions
Office of the Deputy Commissioner
for Patent Examination Policy